Subsidy for food supplies

439. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of subsidy provided for food supplies during the current financial year;

(b) whether the amount is likely to be exceeded as a result of drought in various States; and

(c) if so, the excess amount likely to be provided?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) Rs. 2000 crores.

(b) and (c) The amount of food subsidy depends upon the level of procurement, off-take, food stocks and other factors. Due to drought, off-take of foodgrains may increase this year and may affect the food subsidy. The actual requirement will be reflected in the Budget to be presented on 29-2-1988.

Payment of arrears to the sugarcane growers

440. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated amount of arrears due to sugarcane growers outstanding against sugar mills in the country as on date;

(b) if so, the details of the amount; and

(c) whether Government propose to issue any directives for the payment of sugarcane dues to the sugarcane growers within a stipulated period and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) and (b) The position of cane price payments is available upto 31st January, 1988. The details are as under:

(Rs. crores)

1	Total cane price payable for 1987-88 season	969.21
2	Total price paid upto 31st January, 1988	776.32
3	Amount of cane price remaining upaid	192.89
4	Arrears relating to earlier seasons	12.68

(c) There is already a provision in the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 that the price has to be paid within a period of 14 days from the delivery of sugarcane. However, ensuring timely payment is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments who have the necessary powers and field organizations to enforce payment. The Central Government has been monitoring the position and requesting State Governments to take necessary action.

Cooperative credit to agriculturists

441. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press report which appeared in "The Hindustan Times" of the 8th January, 1988 wherein it has been stated that the flow of cooperative credit to Agriculturists had been lagging behind the Seventh Five Year Plan targets;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to take fresh initiatives to achieve the target?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir,